THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURH: (a) and (b) The declaration of any road as National Highway depends not only on the consideration that it runs along with coast but on several other considerations including traffic needs, inter-se priority on all India basis and availability of resources. Notwithstanding the above, a length of approximately 362 kms. running along the coast line in Gujarat has already been converted into National Highway.

(c) At present there is no such proposal.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) All the proposals for conversion of State Highways into National Highways have been returned to the State Government of Gujarat. Presently there is a ban on declaration of new National Highways due to fund constraints. The Government may, however, consider conversion of very limited lengths of a few State Highways into National Highways during the course of the 10th Five Year Plan, keeping in view the traffic needs, inter-se priority and availability of funds, after the ban is lifted.

Express Highway from Kasaragode toThiruvananthapuram

2456. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to construct an Express Highway from Kasaragode to Thiruvananthapuram; and

(b) if so, the details thereof including employment opportunities and spur in the economic development?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) No, Sir. Ministry has no plan to construct an Express Highway from Kasaragode toThiruvananthapuram in Kerala.

(b) Does not arise.